

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 102659 TOSEC 040194
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S E C R E T STATE 102659 TOSEC 040194

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: RH, UK, PDEV

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: YOUR MEETING WITH THE FIVE, APRIL 23-24

1. BACKGROUND: THE PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FIVE DURING YOUR LONDON MEETINGS WILL PROBABLY BE NAMIBIA. HOWEVER, THE FRENCH, CANADIANS AND GERMANS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ALSO WANT TO BE BRIEFED BY YOU AND DR. OWEN ON THE RESULTS OF YOUR DISCUSSIONS ON RHODESIA IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

2. THE OTHER THREE WILL WANT TO BE ASSURED THAT THE UK AND US ARE NOT PLANNING A MAJOR CHANGE IN STRATEGY WHICH WOULD CATCH THEM BY SURPRISE WHILE THEY CONTINUED TO SUPPORT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 102659 TOSEC 040194

3. POINTS TO BE MADE:

A. THERE WERE BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ELEMENTS WHICH EMERGED FROM OUR CONVERSATIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA ABOUT RHODESIA. OVERALL, WE ARE NOT UNHAPPY WITH THE RESULTS OF THE TRIP.

B. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, THE FOLLOWING WAS ACCOMPLISHED:

- HIGH LEVEL, CONTINUING ANGLO-AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WAS DEMONSTRATED;
- THE DOOR HAS BEEN KEPT OPEN TO FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS;
- MAINTAINING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AS A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO INCREASED MILITARY STRUGGLE STRENGTHENS FRONT LINE RESISTANCE TO CUBAN/SOVIET INVOLVEMENT;
- THE PATRIOTIC FRONT MOVED CLOSER IN CERTAIN AREAS TO MORE NEGOTIABLE POSITIONS;
- THE RHODESIAN INTERIM REGIME AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WERE INFORMED IN VERY CLEAR TERMS ABOUT THE NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT; AND
- BY MEETING WITH THE PF AND THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AS GROUPS, THE STAGE HAS BEEN SET FOR TWO-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS.

C. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE THE FOLLOWING EMERGED FROM THE TRIP:

- WE DID NOT GET FROM THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WHAT WE HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THEY WERE PREPARED TO CONCEDE BY

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 102659 TOSEC 040194

THE FRONT LINE STATES;

- SOME OF THE FRONT LINE STATES, PERHAPS IN A SPIRIT OF JUSTIFICATION OR RATIONALIZATION, ARE PREPARED TO FAULT US FOR THE LACK OF PROGRESS, (BOTSWANA, WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE MOST REALISTIC IS, HOWEVER, THOROUGHLY DISGUSTED WITH THE PF'S PERFORMANCE); AND
- NO REAL INDICATION DEVELOPED THAT EITHER GROUP IS WILLING TO COMPROMISE SUFFICIENTLY ON MAJOR ISSUES TO SATISFY THE OTHER.

D. IN DAR ES SALAAM THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AGREED, IN PRINCIPLE, TO THE PRESENCE OF A UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD. IT ALSO AGREED THAT THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, OR THE NEUTRAL ADMINISTRATOR, SHOULD HAVE EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY OVER DEFENSE AND LAW AND ORDER. THESE WERE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS.

E. HOWEVER, THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WAS UNWILLING TO ABANDON ITS POSITION THAT IT MUST HAVE PREDOMINANCE ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. FURTHER, IT ARGUED THAT PATRIOTIC

FRONT FORCES MUST BE INTEGRATED INTO THE POLICE DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD.

F. DR. OWEN AND I TOLD THE PF THAT THEIR POSITIONS ON THESE TWO ISSUES WERE INCONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS WHICH ARGUE FOR A NEUTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY IN WHICH NO ONE GROUP CAN DOMINATE. THEREFORE, WE TOLD THEM THAT WE COULD NOT ACCEPT THEIR POSITIONS, BUT THAT THEY WOULD BE FREE TO ARGUE FOR THEM AT AN ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE.

G. IN SOUTH AFRICA WE IMPRESSED UPON FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA THE NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT, INVOLVING UN PARTICIPATION, AS THE BEST
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 102659 TOSEC 040194

MEANS OF AVOIDING FURTHER FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN THE RHODESIAN CONFLICT. BOTHA WAS OFFICIALLY NONCOMMITTAL, THOUGH IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS HE WAS MORE UNDERSTANDING AND FORTHCOMING.

H. WE MADE THE SAME POINT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN SALISBURY. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE SALISBURY GROUP URGED OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, WHICH THEY CLAIM HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE RHODESIAN MAJORITY.

I. THE SALISBURY GROUP IS CONVINCED OF THE RIGHTNESS AND VIABILITY OF THEIR ARRANGEMENT. HOWEVER, THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT SMITH, IN PARTICULAR, IS ANXIOUS NOT TO CUT HIMSELF OFF FROM THE WEST AND, FOR THIS REASON, MIGHT ENTERTAIN THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AS A DEMONSTRATION OF HIS "REASONABLE" ATTITUDE.

J. HOWEVER, IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT SMITH'S POTENTIAL PRAGMATISM ON THIS ISSUE MAY NOT BE MATCHED BY HIS BLACK ASSOCIATES ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. HAVING GAINED A TENUOUS GRASP ON SOME AUTHORITY, THEY FEAR THEY MAY HAVE ALL TO LOSE AND NOTHING TO GAIN FROM A SETTLEMENT WHICH INCLUDES THE PF.

K. WE ARE AWARE OF PRESS REPORTS WHICH INDICATE THAT OUR STRATEGY IS NOW DESIGNED TO SPLIT NKOMO FROM MUGABE. THIS IS DECIDEDLY NOT THE CASE.

L. SUCH A SPLIT MAY OCCUR, HOWEVER. THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF CONTINUING CONTACT BETWEEN NKOMO AND SMITH, TENSIONS BETWEEN NKOMO AND MUGABE REMAIN, AND THERE IS A GENERAL PERCEPTION AMONG WHITE RHODESIANS THAT, IN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 102659 TOSEC 040194

ORDER TO SECURE THE SUPPORT OF THE MATABELE TRIBAL GROUP (ABOUT 17 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION), NKOMO WOULD HAVE TO BE INVOLVED IN A SETTLEMENT.

M. HOWEVER, IT IS QUITE UNCLEAR WHETHER SMITH AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WOULD BE PREPARED IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO PROVIDE ENOUGH INCENTIVE TO NKOMO TO ALLOW HIM TO ABANDON HIS ALLIANCE WITH MUGABE.

N. IN ANY EVENT, WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE BEST ROLE FOR US TO PLAY IS TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO BRING THE PARTIES TOGETHER FOR NEGOTIATIONS. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO CHOOSE SIDES, LEST WE LOSE ALL CREDIBILITY WITH THE OPPONENTS OF WHICHEVER SIDE WE BACK. WE MUST ADHERE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS, BUT WE WILL MAINTAIN FLEXIBILITY IF ALL OF THE PARTIES THEMSELVES CAN COME TO AN AGREEMENT AT VARIANCE WITH THE DETAILS OF THE AAP.

CHRISTOPHER

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